



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/540,840	01/05/2006	Yoshinobu Morimoto	Q88695	2260
65565	7590	11/27/2009	EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE-265550			MERCIER, MELISSA S	
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVE. NW			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
WASHINGTON, DC 20037-3213			1615	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			11/27/2009	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

SUGHRUE265550@SUGHRUE.COM
USPTO@SUGHRUE.COM
PPROCESSING@SUGHRUE.COM

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/540,840	MORIMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	MELISSA S. MERCIER	1615	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 July 2009.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 16 and 17 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 16-17 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Summary

Receipt of Applicants Remarks filed on July 10, 2009 is acknowledged. Claims 16-17 remain pending in this application. IT is acknowledged that a typographical error was made by the Examiner on the PTO 326 with the last office action. However, Applicant is correct in noting that the appropriate claim numbers were listed with the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 16-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kita et al. (CA 2086565), in view of Salim (US Patent 4,945,094).

Kita discloses oral administration of tranexamic acid and ascorbic acid capable of effectively curing pigmentation (abstract).

Kita does not disclose the use of L-cysteine.

Salim discloses compositions used for improving the condition of the skin.

Preferable agents include cysteine (column 1, lines 25), in both the D and L individual isomers and enantiomers (column 1, lines 40-43). The composition can be administered orally (column 3, lines 5-6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have added the cysteine taught by Salim into the composition of Kita since Salim discloses it has been found to improve the condition of the skin in a number of ways including improving healing of wounds, and protection against non-mechanical injury from injurious chemical materials and against degeneration from other causes including aging (column 1, lines 45-52).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues:

***Kita teaches away from the claimed invention because he discloses the use of vitamin C derivatives, L-cysteine, glutathione, tranexamic acid, ect. do not show a sufficient effect in a short time.**

This argument is not found persuasive because Kita does disclose the use of tranexamic acid and ascorbic acid, in combination does produce a synergistically enhanced effect in the treatment of pigmentation and produces a high therapeutic effect through short term administration. Therefore, while the reference may disclose the components individually do not have a high therapeutic effect in the short term; it does disclose the combination of the components is effective.

***Kita discloses the L-cysteine does not have an effect in the short term and the skilled artisan would not be motivated to add it into the composition.**

Again, the examiner respectfully disagrees. In response to applicant's argument that there is no motivation to add L-cysteine, the fact that applicant has recognized

another advantage which would flow naturally from following the suggestion of the prior art cannot be the basis for patentability when the differences would otherwise be obvious. See *Ex parte Obiaya*, 227 USPQ 58, 60 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1985). Salim discloses the use of L-cysteine has been found to improve the condition of the skin in a number of ways including improving healing of wounds, and protection against non-mechanical injury from injurious chemical materials and against degeneration from other causes including aging (column 1, lines 45-52).

Since the primary reference discloses the combination of tranexamic acid and ascorbic acid perform the claimed method of skin whitening, the skilled artisan would also recognize that the combination of tranexamic acid, ascorbic acid and L-cysteine would also perform the claimed method.

The rejection is therefore maintained.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MELISSA S. MERCIER whose telephone number is (571)272-9039. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00am-4:30pm Mon through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert A. Wax can be reached on (571) 272-0623. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Melissa S Mercier/
Examiner, Art Unit 1615

/Robert A. Wax/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1615